

Cath Petroskey

From: Dennis Prunkard <dprunkard@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, October 30, 2017 3:02 PM
To: Cath Petroskey
Cc: aneta@lmb.org
Subject: House Transportation and Safety Committee- Oct 31 Cyclist Safety Bills Hearing

Dear Ms. Petroskey – Please submit this letter as testimony for the hearing on Tuesday, October 31

Members of the Transportation and Safety Committee:

I note that this committee is finally addressing the current bills dealing with bicycle safety, although similar bills have been referred to the Committee for the last few years.

The Downriver Cycling Club strongly supports the current bills, 4185, 4198, 4165 & 5003 for passage into law this year. Too many cyclist lives are being lost, and the fatality rate in Michigan is increasing alarmingly.

The time has come to demonstrate your concern for the safety of your cycling constituents, as well as all cyclists in ese Michigan. We urge you to support the bills referenced above. Approve the bills so that they can be voted on by the full House.

In the League of American Bicycling “2017 Bicycling Friendly States” ranking, Michigan ranked poorly for “Legislation & Enforcement” and for “Education & Encouragement”. Michigan lags behind other states in protecting bicyclists, even as bicycle crashes and fatalities continue to rise at an alarming rate. We are one of only eleven states without a law that specifically requires motorists to pass bicyclists safely. Many Michigan cities see the problem and have at least taken the step of unilaterally approving safe passing ordinances. However, this issue requires a uniform state law.

More still needs to be done. The number of cyclists is increasing quickly. Increasing the amount driver education attention given to sharing the road with bicycles is important. In addition, far more needs to be done with enforcing the laws. The stories related by cyclists who have been struck by cars are sad. Too many drivers who are guilty for killing or severely injuring cyclists, go free or pay small fines. Even some members of our state police are ignorant of current laws and/or are openly hostile to cyclists. Please note, though, that I applaud the many police officers who respect cyclists on the road and go beyond the normal to help keep us safe.

Let’s get started with fixing what is clearly broken. Drivers need to share the road with bicyclists.

We appreciate your taking this first step in moving the issue of bicycling safety forward, and we encourage you to vote the current bills out of committee, to be placed before the full House.

Dennis Prunkard
Downriver Cycling Club Board